

I was extremely disappointed that provisions to help our U.S. Citizen Puerto Rican brothers and sisters manage the fiscal crisis in Puerto Rico were not included in the bill. The residents of Puerto Rico are suffering, and we have a responsibility to provide them with the tools they need to rebuild their economy.

I was also disappointed that on the heels of a historic climate change agreement, the bill includes a giveaway to Big Oil by ending the 40-year prohibition on the exportation of crude oil. This prohibition was set in place to help our country achieve energy independence and to protect national security and economic interests. Lifting this ban will only hinder our goals and harm American refinery jobs, all for the sake of a handout to Big Oil.

However, without this omnibus bill, my home state of California and communities across the country would be faced with the uncertain funding level of a continuing resolution, or, in the worst case, the effects of a government shutdown.

We cannot risk another government shutdown or another year of flat funding for the critical programs our communities need. On balance, I believe this bill should move forward. For that reason, I ask for an aye vote.

**MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RE-
LATED AGENCIES APPROPRIA-
TIONS ACT, 2016**

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, the cybersecurity measures in the legislation before us today results from a bill passed unanimously by the House Homeland Security Committee and the House Select Committee on Intelligence, who both worked closely with the Judiciary Committee to craft the liability provisions included in the House-passed bill, and in the bill before us today. I rise to discuss its liability provisions in particular.

It is increasingly clear that government at all levels must rely on the private sector to help counter more and varied threats to its citizens by those who would do them harm. Those threats can come in the form of terrorist mass shootings, suicide bombers, and cyber-attacks that steal people's personal identification, money, and credit. At the same time, abusive lawsuits have made the private sector less and less willing to take action to reduce public risks because of the fear of frivolous lawsuits.

To date, Congress has enacted two federal statutes, the SAFETY Act and the PREP Act, to provide private entities that are on the front lines in the war with terrorists with protection from debilitating litigation that would otherwise deter them from acting at all. The legislation before us today is a logical extension of those vital efforts.

Soon after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the federal government appealed directly to the private sector for help in combating terrorism. Shortly thereafter, a team of the nation's leading scientists called for a comprehensive rethinking of our anti-terrorism infrastructure, underscoring the need to encourage private activity so existing tech-

nologies could be quickly brought into use. According to their report, conducted under the auspices of the National Academies, "Research performed but not exploited, and technologies invented but not manufactured and deployed, do not help the nation protect itself."

As part of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Congress enacted liability protections that the Department of Homeland Security could extend to providers of effective anti-terrorism technologies. The SAFETY Act has resulted in the deployment of tens of thousands of anti-terrorism technologies to protect innocent Americans that would not have been deployed absent the Act's lawsuit protections.

The SAFETY Act was initially opposed by the trial lawyers and their allies. But it soon came to enjoy broad bipartisan support. So much so that in January, 2007, just after the Democrats took control the House, a bill directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to streamline the SAFETY Act and anti-terrorism technology procurement processes passed by a vote of 427 to zero. During the debate on that legislation, the Democratic Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, BENNIE THOMPSON, said during debate on the bill: "Today I rise to support a bill that reaffirms our commitment to ensuring that safe and effective antiterrorism technologies are being deployed . . . In order to generate revolutionary breakthroughs in antiterrorism technologies, the Department must actively promote awareness of SAFETY Act protections not only among private sector, but across government procurement agencies . . . We must enable the private sector to deliver the revolutionary, breakthrough technologies that will help win the Nation's fight against terrorism."

In 2005, Congress enacted the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act, the "PREP Act." Under the PREP Act, covered entities are protected from lawsuits when they engage in federally approved efforts to create vaccines and other means of stopping the spread of pandemics and other biological threats, including biological attacks by terrorists. Again, the PREP Act was initially opposed by the trial lawyers and their allies. But after it became law, President Obama, along with his predecessor, applied the PREP Act's protections many times, including to cover those making and administering influenza vaccines. Just last December, President Obama's Secretary of Health and Human Services applied the PREP Act's lawsuit protections to those manufacturing and distributing vaccines to help prevent the spread of the Ebola virus. In a press release announcing the application of the liability protections to those companies, the Secretary of Health and Human Services stated, and I quote, "The PREP Act was designed to facilitate the development of medical countermeasures to respond to urgent public health needs, including the development of critical vaccines like those to prevent the spread of Ebola . . . My strong hope . . . is that other nations will also enact appropriate liability protection . . ." Indeed, one of the vaccines the President protected from excessive liability under the PREP Act was able to quickly advance through its testing phases such that, by this August, it was declared "highly effective."

Today, I am proud to continue the bipartisan tradition of protecting the private sector from lawsuits when it's necessary to help the federal government do its job in protecting our nation's citizens from attack.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF SER-
GEANT KEVIN GALE STAUFFER

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Sergeant Kevin Gale Stauffer of Tupelo, Mississippi who joined his Heavenly Father on December 23, 2013.

Sergeant Stauffer made the ultimate sacrifice when he gave his life while keeping the citizens of the city of Tupelo safe during a tragic encounter following a reported bank robbery. The lives of others were saved because of Sergeant Stauffer's actions.

Known to his family and friends as Gale, as a young man he earned the honor of being awarded the Eagle Scout badge. After graduating high school, he went on to attend Itawamba Community College where he was a member of the Indians football team. With a passion for learning, he continued his education at the University of Mississippi where he earned a degree in criminal justice.

A true patriot, Gale felt called to serve his country. He enlisted in the Louisiana Army National Guard, 1088th Engineer Battalion and bravely served his tour of duty in Iraq as a Sergeant in 2004 and 2005.

Prior to his tour of duty in Iraq, Sergeant Stauffer worked for the Lee County Sheriff's Department. Upon his return from deployment, he joined the ranks of the Tupelo Police Department. He was a true public servant and loved his job as a police officer. He was a thorough investigator who always showed sincere compassion for every victim.

Outside of work, Gale was known for his love of the outdoors, his Cajun cooking, and his passion for LSU football. He was also a member of First United Methodist Church in Tupelo.

Above all, those who knew Sergeant Stauffer knew him as an adoring and devoted husband to his wife Beth and a kind loving father to his two children, Dixie and Skip.

He is survived by his wife, Beth; daughter, Dixie Breckenridge Stauffer; and son, Kevin Gale (Skip) Stauffer, III of Tupelo. He is also survived by his father, Kevin Gale Stauffer, Sr. and stepmother, Kay Stauffer of Baton Rouge, LA; mother, Deborah Brangenberg and stepfather, Carl J. Brangenberg of Tupelo; sister, Caroline Turney (Brandon) of Tupelo; two stepbrothers, Scott Cooper of Baton Rouge, LA and Chris Brangenberg of Breaux Bridge, LA; stepsister, Carla Brangenberg of Memphis, TN; grandmother, Dr. Dorothy Twiss Sinopoli of Gulf Breeze, FL; grandparents, Dr. Roy and Mrs. Lorene McAlilly of Tupelo.

My thoughts and prayers continue to be with Sergeant Stauffer's family and friends.

**SUPPORTING DEBT RELIEF FOR
PUERTO RICO**

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to stand with our fellow Americans, the 3.5 million American citizens of